

ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION

[0086] In order to prevent conception and/or the spread of sexually transmitted diseases (STD's) one or more lectins capable of binding sperm and/or the pathogenic microorganisms responsible for STD's are administered to the vagina prior to sexual intercourse. The lectins immobilize the sperm to render them incapable of fertilization and also bind to the microorganisms to render them non-pathogenic or to the cells to prevent infection by the microorganisms. Lectins can also be administered to treat sexually transmitted vaginal infections. The invention also encompasses a device to be placed in the vault of the vagina which comprises a ring which surrounds the cervix and a membrane spanning the central aperture of the ring to prevent the direct contact of ejaculate with the cervical tissues. The device is impregnated or coated with lectins and releases them into the vaginal environment over a period of time.